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Editorial Topics.

POLITICS.

THE political situation in Canada is decidedly interesting just now. Conservatives are meeting with extraordinary success in the numerous bye-elections now going on, and the majority for the Federal Government is waxing exceeding great. Canadians account for this success in various ways, and according to their political faith; but making every allowance for this and that "solid" vote and this and that particular interest, it is pretty clear to the unprejudiced mind that commercial union with the United States or unrestricted reciprocity, which ever you may please to call it, is not making much headway in Canada. Constituencies lying hard by the domain of Uncle Sam and popularly supposed to be enamoured with the idea of reciprocity, have declared against its champions in no uncertain voice. No doubt the Conservatives have been aided not a little by the Count of the Holy Roman Empire, and the discredit he and his astute lieutenants have brought upon the Liberal party by their interesting experiments in financial affairs. We in common with our fellow Canadians have always regarded the great Liberal party of Canada as nothing if not pure, and to find that its supposed chief characteristic is not a characteristic after all, is a great shock to our moral susceptibilities. The fact seems to be that the electors have come to the conclusion that the Lib-

erals know as much about boodling as the Conservatives do, and preferring for the most part the policy advocated by the latter party, they have chosen to support its candidates, praying the while that boodle and boodlers may soon be things of the past.

UNIVERSITY EXTENSION.

THE Conference on the subject of University Extension Lectures and the meeting of delegates from the different Universities of the Dominion to draw up a scheme under which these lectures may be carried on have directed attention to this important question. Both these meetings were held in Toronto. To us at Trinity there has been the added interest that Trinity has already taken the field with the two courses on English Literature, the one delivered last term in Toronto, and the other at present going on at Hamilton. The movement took its rise in England, its originator being Professor Stuart, of Cambridge, now member of Parliament for a metropolitan constituency. The aim was to take the place of the isolated popular lectures and to substitute a course of systematic instruction on some one subject. It was felt that in the town especially there was a large number of both sexes who would welcome the opportunity of continuous study extending over a lengthy period under competent direction, and this was found to be the case. The movement at once was a great success. Oxford, London and Durham followed the example of Cambridge, and the University Extension Lectures have become a feature of English town life. The movement has extended to the United States, and has met with great and growing success, and in more than one Province of the Dominion of Canada it has gained a firm hold. So great has been the success of the movement in England and so marked the benefits that it has conferred on the community at large that the demand has been made by some of its supporters for a grant from the Public Treasury, but this has been opposed so far successfully by many other of its friends who see that State aid means State regulation and control. It is to be hoped that the movement which is in its infancy in Canada, and which depends for its success on its elasticity will not be crushed at the outset by over-regulation. The control of the movement should be in the hands of the Universities as a whole, and each should be left as far as possible a free hand, being held responsible for its own work. The following are the chief features of the scheme in England. The Lecturers are appointed by the University, the necessary funds being guaranteed by the Local Committees, who are responsible for all expenses. A course extends as a rule to ten or twelve lectures. A carefully prepared syllabus is issued for each lecture. The lecture lasts about an hour, and there are usually a number of those who attend who are satisfied with simply attending—doing no further work. But encouragement is given to those who mean real study in the following ways: text-books are appointed, and the portions to be read are stated on the syllabus of each lecture. Questions are set after each lecture, to which all those who wish may send written answers—the fruits of the lecture and their reading. These answers are read and corrected by the lecturer, who comments on them at the class which is held at the conclusion of each lecture. In this class questions may be asked and difficulties stated.